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MEN and THINGS *

IN ALBANY

* Two Centuries Ago

By JOEL MUNSELL.

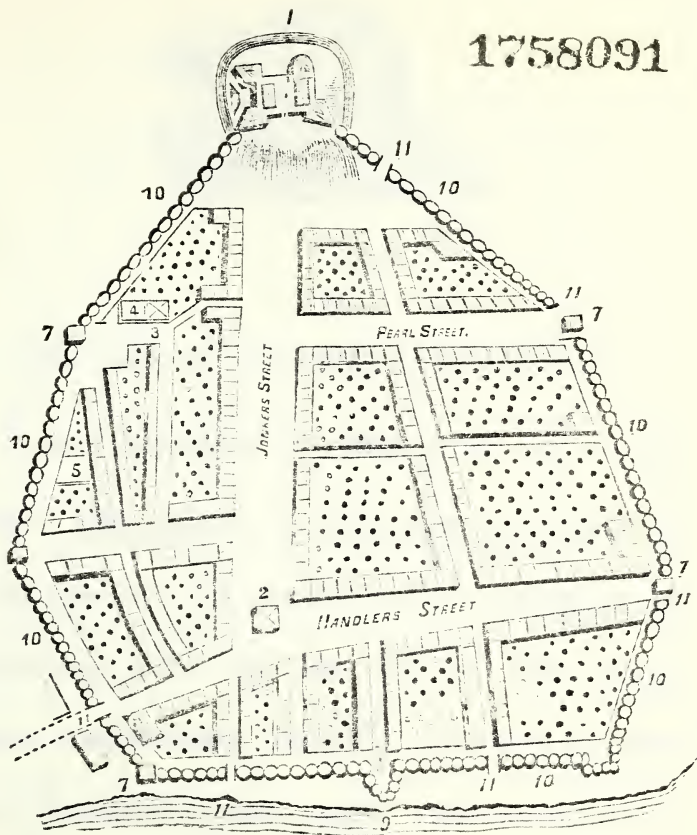
JOEL MUNSELL'S SONS,

82 State Street,

Albany, N. Y.

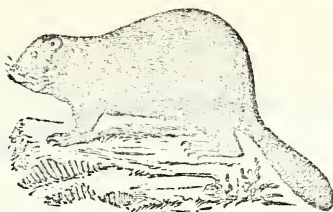
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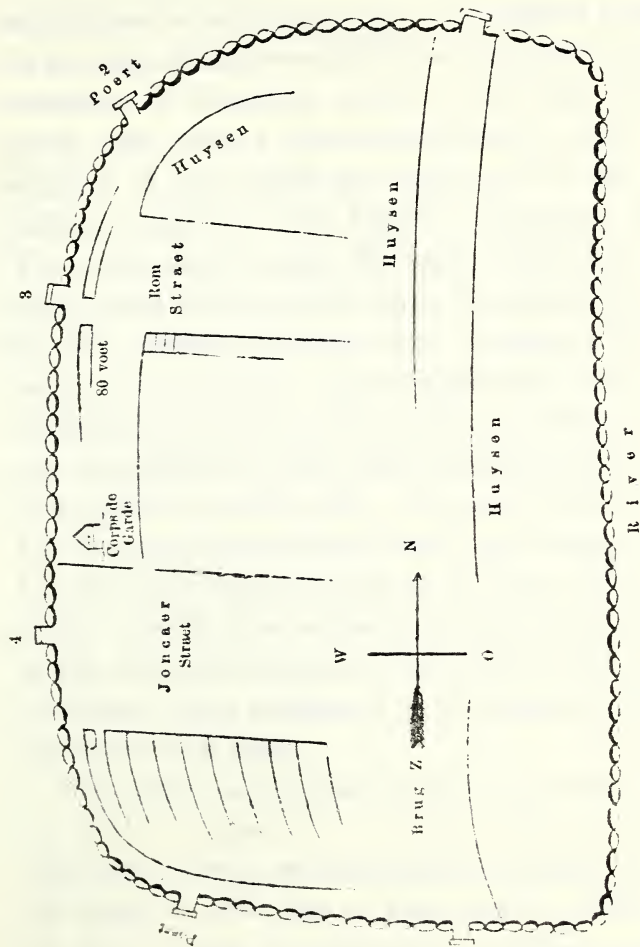
PLAN OF ALBANY, 1695.

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. The fort. | 6. Studios, or City Hall. |
| 2. Dutch church. | 7. Blockhouses. |
| 3. Lutheran Church. | 9. Great gun to clear a gulley. |
| 4. Its burial place. | 10. Stockades. |
| 5. Dutch church do. | 11. City gates 6 in all. |



[Read before the Albany Institute, April 18, 1876.]

I now propose to take you on a tour about the streets within the purlieus of these quaint old walls, for the purpose of pointing out, by the aid of the map, some interesting localities as they existed two hundred years ago, and to revive a memory of men and things long since departed, and whose places are now so differently occupied.



PLAN OF ALBANY, 1670.

This diagram of the ancient city of Albany is as it existed two hundred years ago. A hundred years ago, in the time of the revolution, the stockades had been extended to Hamilton street on the south, and the north gate stood a little above Orange street. The original of this profile was made by the Rev. John Miller, chaplain of the English grenadiers in New York, who was the only Episcopal clergyman in the colony from 1693 to 1695, when he made drawings of the few military defenses then existing within the borders of this state. As we know from the present configuration of this portion of Albany, the map could not have differed much from the actual form of the city within its wooden walls. Pearl and Beaver streets are the only thoroughfares which the common council has left unchanged in name of all that this plan exhibits. It will be seen that the streets have now very nearly the same direction as then, and that the present curvatures were conformed to the courses which the stockades gave them.

The oldest map of the city that has come down to us, which is supposed to be about thirty years older than this, extends its boundaries no farther west than the upper or west line of Pearl street, and extended north and south from Steuben to Hudson street. It

exhibits these streets now known as Broadway, State, and Maiden lane. The figures 1-6, refer to the gates. *Brug*, indicates where the Rutten kil was crossed by a bridge.

I hardly need to mention perhaps that those stockades were composed of pine logs thirteen feet in length, and about one foot in diameter, somewhat tapered at the end set in the ground, and were dowelled together near the top, leaving ten feet above the surface. The lines which they formed were changed from time to time, to afford more space for the increasing population, and undecayed portions of them are sometimes met with in digging for the foundations of new buildings.

When excavations were made a few years ago for the basement of the building on the south-west corner of North Pearl and Canal streets, the workmen uncovered a row of stumps of a stockade, which ran cornerwise across the lot, and a crowd of persons unacquainted with these ancient defenses was gathered there inquisitive regarding the origin of the phenomena.

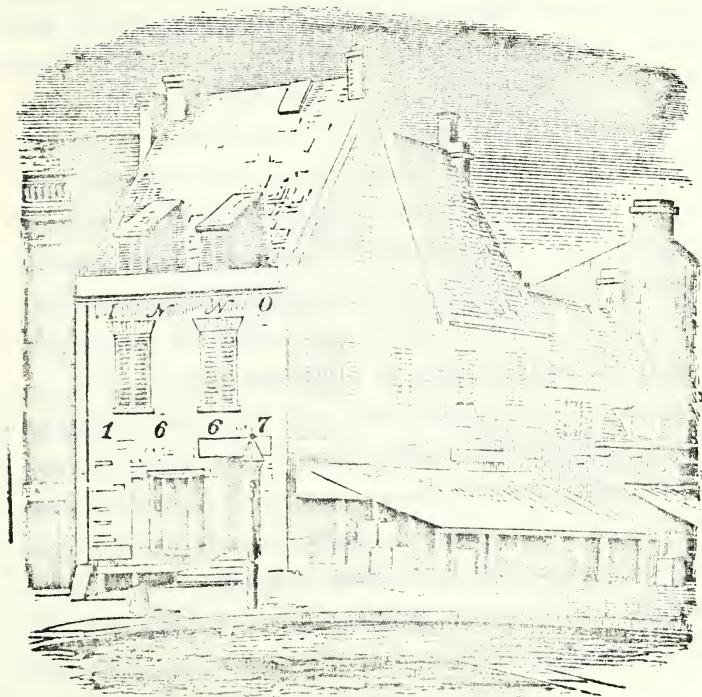
At the period represented by this diagram the north gate was at the upper end of Handlaer street, forming the barrier at the junction of what is now Broadway,

and Steuben street, and the south gate was at Hudson street. There were no cross streets at these extremities, but what they termed the *rounds passage* was kept open for the patrol in times of threatened attack by the Indians or French.

What is now South Pearl street was only a narrow irregular lane leading to the Lutheran church and its burial ground adjoining on the south, bounded by the open Rutten kil, and all below, beyond the stockades, was called the plain. A gate swung across this lane at State street, and the house that stood on the lower corner is represented to have been elaborately finished compared with most of the houses of the time, being wainscotted and ornamented with tiles and carvings. It is found that this lot, nine rods on Jonker street, was patented in 1667 to Cornelius Steenwyck, and that Capt. John Schuyler occupied 55 feet of it in 1680. In that year what is now Norton street was laid out, and was to have been continued to Broadway. The opening of this street extended the State street lots across the Rutten kil southward which before bounded on that stream.

Before Pearl street was opened to its present width, the corner house, removed for that purpose, was long known as Lewis's tavern. In one of these twin houses

Madame Schuyler, the "American Lady" of Mrs. Grant, resided, during the time her house at the Flats was being rebuilt, and in one of them Gen Philip



The Staats House, corner of State and South Pearl streets.

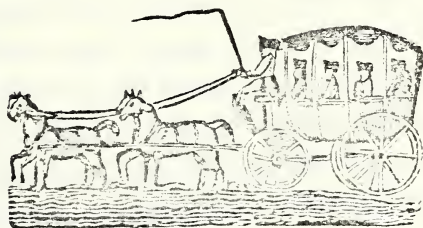
Schuyler of the revolution is said to have been born. The committee of safety held its sessions here also. The street was for many years known as Washington

street. The house now remaining on that corner is regarded as the oldest edifice in the city. There formerly ran across the front of these two houses, under the eaves, in iron letters, the words Anno Domini; and below, over the first story, the figures, also in iron, 1667. When the upper house was taken away, the word ANNO was left on the house still standing, and remains there now conspicuously; and I well remember when the figures were there also, but the owner, who was proud of them for a time, conceived the notion that the great age of his house tended to depreciate its value, and removed them.

As I am now speaking of matters pertaining to the present century, I may, with propriety, mention that Gov. John Taylor lived on the corner of Green street, and that after his death his house was removed and a portion of the lot taken to widen that street, about 1832. Gov. Taylor died in 1829, aged nearly 87. He has filled a large space in the political history of the state, and was the first president of the State bank, where his portrait may now be seen.

Green street was early spoken of as the Voddén markt, that is, the Rag market, and later as Cheapside. It was finally named Greene street, in compliment to Gen. Greene of the revolution, and, raising a

point in orthography it should on that account be written with a final *e*. Some of you will remember when it was a narrow street, merely wide enough to allow the passage of a single vehicle; and the city then being thronged with stage coaches—for at that



Old Stage Coach.

period travelers were taken to every point of the compass by stage, and there being then three famous taverns, before they came to be called hotels, and Bement's recess there also—it was often so blocked that passage could be made but one way, and that was usually to the south. There was the old Stone tavern, kept by James Colvin, and on the corner of Beaver was Dunn's coffee house, while on the upper corner of Green and Beaver was the City tavern, kept by Peter Germond, and previously by Hugh Denniston, known in colonial times as the King's Arms. The ancient sign of this house bore the effigy of King George, and

one of the early outbursts of patriotism in the revolution spent its fury in wrestling that obnoxious emblem of royalty from its hangings, and it was burnt in State street.

The mansion of Gov. Taylor, on the lower corner of State and Greene streets, is still dimly remembered, a broad two story house with a hipped roof, the front door divided in the centre into an upper and a lower door, like most of the old doors, the stoop provided with a bench on each side of the door, where he often sat in pensive contemplation after the manner of early times.

On the opposite corner of Green street, is still standing the store of the renowned William James, the merchant prince of the time, but less imposing in appearance now than when surrounded by one and a-half story gable enders, and when five-story edifices were unknown. Mr. James died in 1832. His conspicuous position among the merchants of Albany, and his almost unparalleled prosperity in those days of lesser things, can hardly be appreciated by the younger portion of merchants. Another magnate was James Caldwell, whose residence was the present store of Smith & Covert, and his place of business was the Gable hall adjoining it. In my recollection portions

of nearly all the houses from Pearl street to Broadway on the south side of State street, were occupied by families, and not a few gable enders were among them. Mr. John Van Zandt, the ancient cashier of the Bank



Gable Hall.

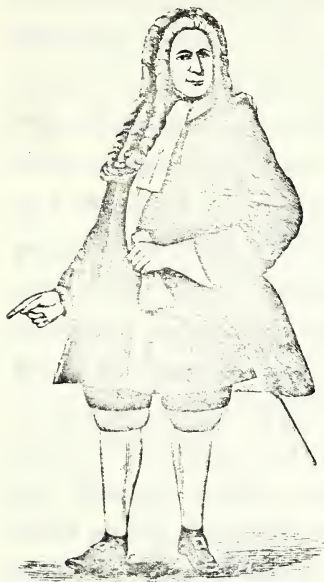
of Albany, who was then nearly ninety years old, told me it was traditional that in those days of primitive simplicity and honesty, the houses on that side had an area or grass plat in front, upon which it was

no unusual practice to leave clothes out all night to bleach.

Going back again a hundred years before the times mentioned as having tried men's souls, we find ourselves in the neighborhood of the Dutch church. The portion of Handelaer street below State was not yet known as Court street, nor the upper portion as Market street. Between State and Beaver was what was called the Great bridge, over the Rутten kil. The Rутten kil had its origin in copious springs on the upper side of Lark street, and as if out of the pond that once stood there, I perceive has arisen the spire of an imposing church edifice. Timbers of great length were sometimes ordered by the common council to span this creek in making repairs to the bridge. It was undoubtedly then a formidable stream, which had been populous with beaver and stocked with fish; now merely a sewer, with an exuberance of rodents!

Adjoining the creek on the south side was the residence of Pieter Schuyler, the first mayor of Albany, son of Philip Pietersen Van Schuyler (1650), who often wrote his name simply Philip Pietersen, that is, Philip the son of Pieter, to distinguish himself from some other Philip, perhaps, such being one of the mysteries of the ancient Dutch nomenclature, chiefly useful

in our time to puzzle the student in antiquarian lore. If one has the perseverance to overcome the difficulties



Portrait of Pieter Schuyler.

thus thrown in his way, it is suggested whether he might not be regarded as entitled to the degree of LL.D.—*Learned in Low Dutch!* This Pieter Schuyler, the mayor of 1686, is memorable for having accompanied the Mohawks to England, in the time of Queen Anne and the Spectator, on which occasion his portrait was painted, as is supposed by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and is still preserved at the Flats among the family relics, by Mr. John Schuyler. The accompanying engraving is copied from it.

State street below Broadway was called Abram Staat's alley, because the doctor, the progenitor of the Staatses of Beverwyck (1642), occupied the front of the Exchange lot, and behind him on the east was the brewery of Volkert Janse Douw, the first of that

name here also (1638). The residence of Volkert Janse was on the upper corner of State street opposite, which lot has belonged to the family nearly 250 years. Probably there is not another instance like it in the city, if we except that of Van Rensselaer. This alley was afterwards extended in width, and called Little State street, and finally widened to its present extent, and the term Little dropped. When I see the lower part of the street several feet under water, and the owners of stores wading about in rubber boots prodigiously elongated upwards, or paddling about in boats to learn if their goods have been lifted above high water mark, I am reminded of the tradition told me by Cornelius Truax, half a century ago, that when the Yankees came over and began to build below Dean street, the Dutchmen told them that if they had seen the river break up they would not build there.

Here we recognize on the map the late Exchange street, formerly known as Mark lane, now obliterated to give verge and scope to the ambitious designs of the government architect of the new custom house. A street or alley ran down between this street and Maiden lane, which was long since closed up; and next comes Maiden lane itself, spoken of in the records

as Rom street—the origin of the name can only be conjectured.

On the lower corner of Maiden Lane and Broadway, Harmen Harmense Van Gansevoort, so he wrote his name (1660, the progenitor of that name here, purchased the lot in 1667 of Paulus Martense Van Benthuisen, the first of the Van Benthuisens here,



NORTH MARKET STREET, 1805.

2 Gansevoort. 4 Hun. 8 Market. 10 James Kane. 11 Church.

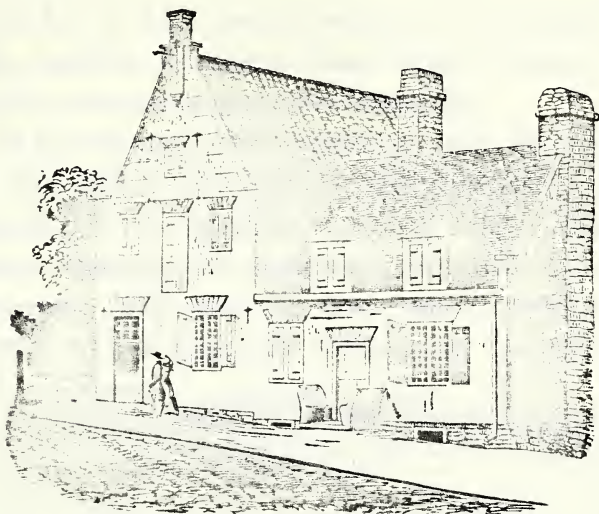
and located a brewery, which gave to the lower part of the street the name of *Brouwer's straat*. Here, in a house standing within the memory of the sexagenarian, was born the famous Gen. Gansevoort, of the revolution, whose son, just passed away, erected a noble edifice to mark the habitation of his ancestor, the hero of Fort Stanwix, the present Stanwix Hall hotel.

Other notable citizens of the olden time might be mentioned here, if time and your patience would permit.

The space between the city wall at Steuben street was also called the rounds passage, twenty feet wide. In time of peace the common council had much difficulty to keep the owners of adjoining lots from infringing upon it. These defences were a great tax upon the people, and severe orders in council were often issued compelling persons to haul their quota of logs to repair the stockades opposite their premises and occasionally it is found that a woman, somewhat tardy in performing the same service, is sternly commanded to "ride" her stockades.

Outside of the stockades north on the line with Pearl street, was erected in 1710, by the father of Col. Jacob Lansing of the revolution, the house still standing there, and known as the Pemberton house,

on the corner of Columbia street. This house was so constructed that no two adjoining rooms were on the same level, but on stepping out of one room into another it was necessary to ascend or descend two or

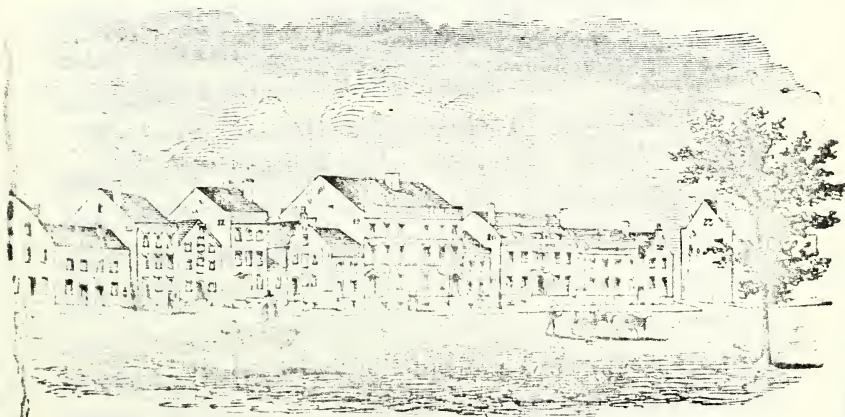


Pemberton House, 1710.

three steps to the next. The ceilings were not lath-and-plastered, but the beams and sleepers were polished and waxed, and the jambs of the fire places were faced with porcelain, ornamented with scripture scenes. The same peculiarity may be seen in the construction of the floors of the Staats house, now the corner of State and South Pearl streets.

For a long time the north gate was at Steuben street, defended by a block-house, on which cannon were mounted. There were matters of some interest beyond it, but we can merely stop to mention the great fire of 1797, which rendered one hundred and fifty families houseless, from Steuben street northward—the second great fire of the city.

In returning to State street, we pass the residence of Dr. Samuel Stringer, of the revolution, still remaining in the block on the west side of Broadway below Steuben, but somewhat disguised by modern changes. This was the first house in which white marble was used for sills and caps for windows. Ad-



NORTH MARKET STREET, WEST SIDE, 1825.

B. Blecker. 18 J. H. Wendell. 19 Dr. Stringer. 22 S. Lansing. 23 C. Lansing.

joining his office on the south, dwelt Gen. John H. Wendell, of the revolution. These two veterans adhered to the costume of the olden time till their decease, the latter being the last of the cocked hats, in 1832. This part of Handlaer street, that is, Merchant's or Trader's street, came to be called Market street about 1790, when a market-house was built in the centre of it below Maiden lane. Noticing trifles as we proceed, I will mention that this market was removed to a vacant lot behind the old Lutheran church, now forming the corner of Howard and William streets, where it was long famous as Cassidy's and Friedenreich's market, but more significantly termed the Fly market, and still stands there, in the guise of an oyster shop and a *sample room*—an institution unknown to the *oulders* under that name.

We have now returned to one of the most notable localities of this notable city—the Dutch church. But before entering its venerable porch, allow me to speak of its predecessor, the first church of the colonists, built, we are told, in the pine grove, somewhere in the neighborhood of the present steam boat landing, in 1644. Being the first church edifice erected in this region, it serves to mark the progress of church architecture to mention that it was provided with pews for

the magistrates and deacons, and nine benches for the congregation, at an expense of about \$38. Here Megapolensis was engaged in his ministrations when, in 1648, the grim Peter Stuyvesant came up from Manhattan, and took possession of Fort Orange and all that eligible ground, and four years later forced the inhabitants that had settled around it to remove, and give scope to the guns placed there to defend it. He also seized a strip of the patroon's manor, one mile wide and fourteen miles long, in the name of their high mightinesses, the states general of Holland. This gives Albany its singular appearance on the map, which so many have remarked without being able to account for. It gave the government a military road through the patroon's manor into the vast country beyond.

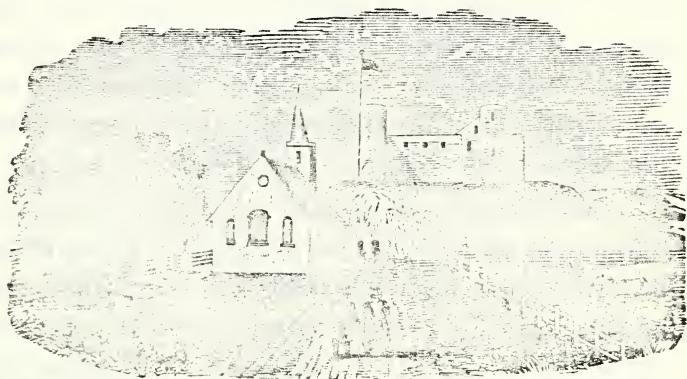
The people being forced away from Fort Orange, began more actively to build on the higher ground at the corners of State street and Broadway, and the new cluster of habitations was called Beverwyck. The patroon had already planted his colony farther north, and his tenants stretched along the territory extending from Stuyvesant's city line northward, known as the Colonie, the nucleus of Rensselaerwyck. Speaking of the city line gives occasion to mention

that when Gov. Stuyvesant took possession of the territory which afterwards comprised the city of Albany, he planted a cannon at Fort Orange and firing a ball north it struck the ground at Quackenbush street, and the ball sent south spent its force at Gansevoort street; and the territory within that space, about one mile in distance, was made the bounds of the future city, and the lines run at right angles with the shore of the river at this point, gave a northwesterly direction to the tract so taken for public use; and the English governor Dongan, in 1685, exacted this concession from the patroon before granting him a patent for the manor.

These different villages or settlements led to misunderstanding, the whole region being often designated as Fort Orange, whereas the fort was the government seat, located on the exact ground now occupied by the Susquehanna freight office. Beverwyck was a distinct hamlet or village, and so called until the English took possession of the country in 1664, when its name was changed to Albany. But the Dutch recovered their territory in 1673, when for about a year it was known as Willemstadt.

After the church was removed from Fort Orange, the foot of State street was 'chosen' for its location,

where it was built and occupied in 1656. It was a small wooden structure, which remained in use about sixty years. The circumstances leading to its successor in 1715 are somewhat curious and interesting. The occupancy of the country by the English, according to the usual course of things, attracted the immigration of another nationality, officers of the



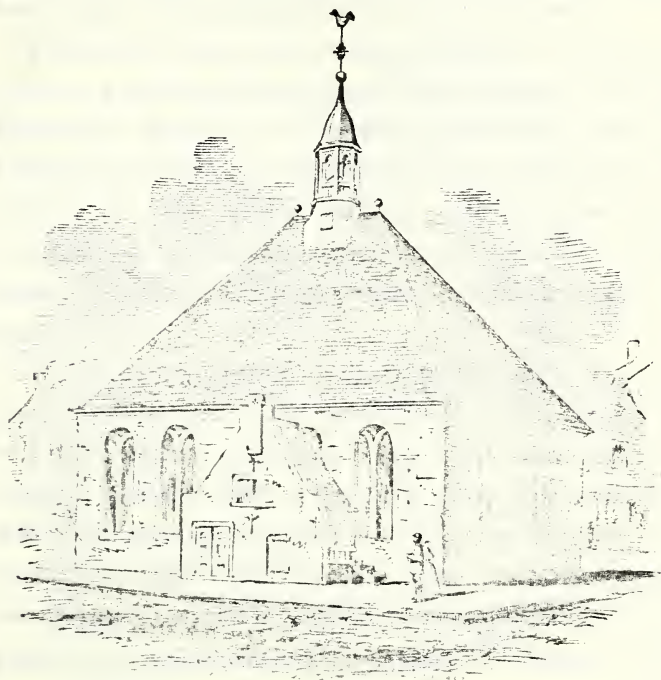
Old English Church and Fort, 1715.

government and adventurers of all pursuits, who in course of time proceeded to organize a church different from the established one of the Dutch Reformed, whose services were conducted in a language unintelligible to the new comers, and they determined to build a house of worship. Taking no counsel of the Dutch, they fixed upon a site at the head of State

street, under the guns of the fort opposite Chapel street, and applied to Gov. Hunter for the ground. He gave permission to take sixty by ninety feet, and supplied all the stone and lime for the building. The common council regarded this proceeding as an unwarrantable infringement of their rights, claiming that the charter conferred the title to the ground upon them, and offering the English an eligible site for their church elsewhere, forbade its location in the street. The governor and rector being inexorable to all remonstrances, and the crisis being imminent, they sent an express to New York in a canoe for the advice of two eminent counsel. Meanwhile the workmen disregarding the injunction of the council, two masons were imprisoned for contempt; but they were admitted to bail or liberated by the governor and the work went on to completion. It was a stone edifice forty-two by fifty-eight feet, without a tower, and was opened for service in 1716.

The Dutch Reformed, finding themselves unable to shape the business to their liking, set about a much wiser enterprise. They began the erection of a new church of stone, on an enlarged scale, and pursued the work with a zeal and alacrity which has ever since been a subject of admiration to their posterity. The

foundations were laid around the old church, and the walls carried up and enclosed before the old one was taken down, and carried out through the doors and windows, so that the customary services were inter-



The Dutch Church of 1715—1806.

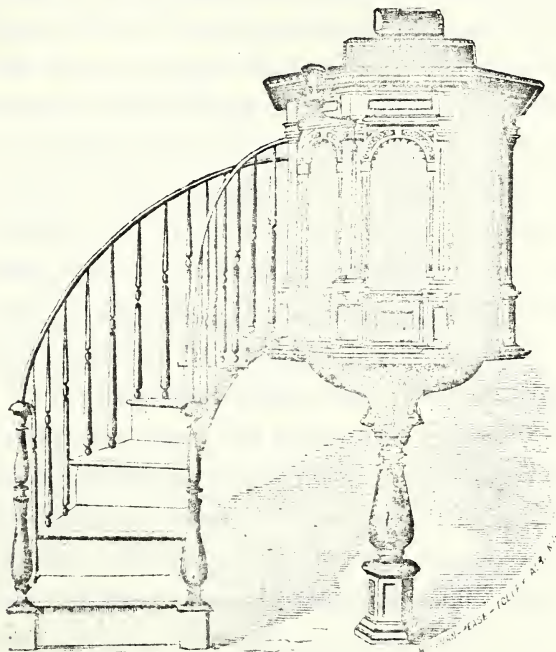
rupted only three Sundays, and they occupied it before the English had completed theirs. It stood in use until 1805, a period of 90 years, and it is recorded

in a Dutch Bible now in the possession of Dr. Thomas Hun, that a child baptized in the church on the first Sunday it was so used, was Elizabeth Vinhagen, and that the church bell was tolled for the last time at her burial, she having died in her 92d year.

The street was now occupied by this church at its foot, by a market house below Pearl street, and by the Episcopal church at its upper extremity; while the battlements of the fort stood upon a lofty eminence overlooking the city, and stretching nearly across the entire width of the present street on the west line of Lodge street, the road to Schenectady winding around its angles.

We are now prepared to enter the church and inspect its interior. The porch was on the south side, and the ancient stepping stone was retained in its original position half a century after the church was removed, serving to point out the precise spot of the entrance to the vestibule, the wear of the footsteps of several generations in passing to their devotions having given it a peculiar conformation. Tenants of the opposite buildings watched it for many years with pious care when the pavement was being repaired; but when they had passed away, some one lacking knowledge insisted that it was wrongly placed and

induced the paver to remove it to the centre of the street, after which it was thrown out altogether and lost to the antiquary. The church stood so nearly across the street, that only a cart-way remained on either side. In length it extended east and west.



Old Pulpit.

On entering the audience room, the pulpit was observed on the north side, octagonal in form, barely large enough for one to speak in, having a bracket in

front on which was placed an hour-glass to measure the length of the pastor's discourse. It served the two edifices a hundred and fifty years, and is still preserved. The seats were slips after the manner of modern churches, but instead of sitting in families, each sitter had an appropriate seat and cushion, which seat was occupied during life, and afterward transferred to the nearest of kin, on payment by the latter of a fee for the transfer. The seats accommodated 611 women, who occupied the entire body pews of the church, and there was an elevated bench extending along the wall, which afforded seats for seventy-nine men. This was the entire capacity of the church until galleries were added at a later day.

It is traditional that when there was danger of invasion, the men sat with their guns by their sides, wearing their hats and muffs, and smoking their pipes during the sermon. The walls were perforated near the top, with loop holes for the use of musketry. To this vigilance the inhabitants owed their immunity from invasion, for the city was never beleaguered by any foe.

I have a plan of the interior of the church, the ground floor taken from a pen drawing of the slips, which had been promised to me for several years by

Mr. Samuel Pruyn, and which he left with me, providentially, as we are accustomed to say of the smallest events, only two days before he died, or we would now have no clue to the form of the interior. It is seen from this that the bell was rung in the middle aisle, and that the stoves were placed on a level with the galleries, supported on posts, and that the smoke pipes went out through the wall. The last of the sextons in this church was Cornelius Van Schaick. Having finished ringing the bell he tied the bell rope around the post, placed in the aisle for the purpose, and went up into the galleries to inspect his fires. He clambered over the front of the galleries, and, having filled the stove with wood, closed the door with such unconscious force as to produce a tremendous bang.

The fronts of the galleries were studded with nails, upon which the occupants of the seats hung their hats, as is seen in one of Hogarth's pictures, so that the manner and custom was not peculiar to this locality; but it presented a novelty to the stranger which was rendered the more picturesque and attractive by the variety of their style, color and condition. The roof was ceiled upon the rafters with boards, from the walls to the cupola, and a chandelier supplied with

candles was suspended in the centre. The windows were in the style of what is now termed French, that



is in two frames opening laterally on hinges; and were composed of smaller compartments or sashes, containing twelve panes each, representing the name and family arms of the person at whose expense it was placed there—the glass stained by a process said to be lost. The panes were about five inches square, and so little care was taken of these family escutcheons when the church was removed in 1806, that but four of them are known to have come down to our time entire. I have a portion of one of these sashes bearing the name Herbertsen, 1657, the pane showing the crest having been given away before it came into my hands. The accompanying engraving of the window of Philip Schuyler, shows the style of all of them, except that it omits the division marks into twelve panes.

Of the very few relics of the old church that were preserved, was a pole with the bag attached to it, that had been used for many years in taking the collections. Those collections were gathered ostensibly for the poor, for the only poor house was owned and maintained by the church.

I can't refrain from giving an instance of the expense of burying a church pauper. On the 15th of February, 1700, Ryseck, widow of Gerrit Swart, the last survivor of the church poor at that date, died

and was buried on the 17th, the expenses of which are copied from the deacon's book. It is entered in Dutch, but I think you will be content with English : Three dry boards for the coffin, 7 guilders 10 stuyvers ; $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. nails, 1*g.* 10*s.* ; making the coffin, 24*g.* ; cartage, 10*s.* : a half vat and an anker of good beer¹ 27*g.* ; one gallon of rum, 21*g.* ; 6 gall. Madeira for women and men, 84*g.* ; sugar and spices, 5*g.* ; 150 sugar cakes, 15*g.* ; tobacco and pipes, 4*g.* 10*s.* ; digging the grave, 30*g.* ; use of the pall, 12*g.* ; inviting to the funeral, 12*g.* ; Mary Lookermans was paid 6*g.* for assistance at the burial, and Maritje Lieverse for nursing 39*g.* Total 289*g.*, or \$115.60. The expenses of maintaining this person four years had been 2,229 guilders, 10 stuyvers.

It was an important duty of the deacons to collect and disburse this poor fund, the accumulations of which at one time amounted to nearly fifteen thousand guilders. As early as 1647, three years after it was organized, the church was rich enough to loan money to the patroon, and the earliest record that remains in its archives is an item of a loan to a woman

¹ An anker was 10 gallons, and a half vat about 11 gallons. Good beer was strong beer, ale. A guilder was nearly 40cts. and a stuyver was nearly 2cts.

upon a pawn of silver ware. It was the province of the young deacons, as they were called, that is, of the two last elected to the office, to take up the collections. The custom was for the domine to halt in the midst of his sermon, when the deacons presented themselves before the pulpit, facing the audience, with each his staff having the bag and bell attached, which they brought to a perpendicular position against their shoulders in military style, whereupon the pastor pronounced a blessing upon the collection about to be taken. These poles enabled them to pass the bag attached to it before every person in the slip, and if from any cause one was drowsy or otherwise inattentive, the tinkle of the bell gave notice of the required duty; then the bag was passed expertly over the heads in that slip and drawn leisurely back before the eyes of the occupants of the next one. The audience being thus thoroughly gleaned, and the domine having recovered his breath, he resumed the broken thread of his discourse. The practice of taking collections during the sermon was discontinued in 1795, in the time of Domine Bassett. In those days of staid devotion, the capacity of church goers for theology must have been much greater than at present, for it is matter of record that discourses were

sometimes dispensed in an almost uninterrupted current for the space of two hours. Now some of us tire after forty minutes discourse ; as if corroborating the theory of Buffon promulgated in the last century, that men and animals would deteriorate in this country.

In the first century of the colony, and some time later even, the currency of the country was principally wampum or sewan, the manufacture of the Indians from shells in the form of beads. The form of the receptacle of these collections concealed the amount of the gift, so that the munificent were not incited by ostentation, nor the needy to deposit their scanty pittance with diffidence. The collection so taken, however, was not unfrequently plentifully mixed with a variety of coin unrecognized by the statute, consisting of any substance that fell into the bag with a chinking sound. The deacons, to rid themselves of this class of contributors, procured open plates ; and although some of the sturdy mynheers resented the innovation by turning their backs and refusing their contributions, the open plates finally carried the day, and the gleanings eleemosynary ceased to be mingled with base coin. A sad fatality awaited the last relic of the old collection implements. An officer of the church, having only a practical ap-

preciation for relics, cut the rod in two, and acquired a portion of it for a walking stick.

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Bodies were allowed to be buried under the church in consideration of the payment of a sum for the privilege. There was at first a grave-yard in the street adjoining the church on the west, and when the lot on which the Middle Dutch church lately stood was appropriated for a cemetery, the bodies under the church were not all removed, it may be inferred, for in digging a trench on the north side of State street in 1875, it perforated the old foundation still remaining there, and human bones were thrown out. The dead were borne on the shoulders of men from the church to the cemetery on Beaver street. Although a trite subject to many of you, I will venture to mention that in process of time this ground on Beaver street was completely buried over, when a foot of sand was added to the surface, and a new tier of coffins placed upon the first, each coffin required to be square, and to be placed against the previous one. The ancient denizens of the city still repose there in three layers, and I wish every one of their descendants could be thoroughly imbued with a filial sentiment of the impropriety, to say the least, of ever parting with that ground; but that the church edifice now standing upon it might be

preserved as a monument to the venerated dead beneath. The bones of Anneke Janse being supposed to rest there, and so great a multitude claiming descent from her, and large expectations from her estate being so general, what adverse influence might arise from a mercenary alienation of those bones, should give us pause !



Ariantje Cocymans.

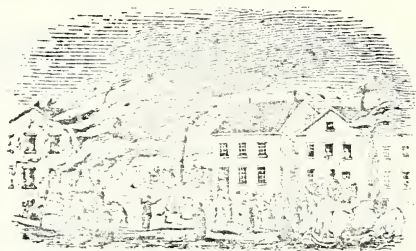
Leaving this theme, we pass on to the place of the residence of the famous Anneke Jans or in the pronunciation of the vernacular, *Onneke Yonse*, which

was the corner of State and James streets, the present site of the Mechanics and Farmers' Bank. As is now well known, through the industry of Dr. O'Callaghan, she came to Albany in 1630, with her husband Roeloff Jansen van Maesterlandt—that is, Ralph the son of John from Masterland—for many of these settlers had no surnames, but were known as being the sons of their fathers, or took the name of the trade they followed, or the place of their nativity in Holland. Roeloff Jansen died in New York in 1637, and his widow married Dom. Bogardus. He was lost at sea in 1647, and she returned to Albany where she died in 1663. The New York bouwery, owned by her first husband, was on the west side of Broadway, extending along the river from Chambers to Canal street, with a strip running up to give an entrance from Broadway. Although this farm was sold to the government by her heirs, and payment made to them therefor, and afterwards formed a portion of what was known as the King's farm, and subsequently donated by the government to Trinity church, a large number of persons are still entertaining a hope of deriving an inheritance from a partition of the premises.

In the last century when the Indian tribes came to the city to receive presents or pensions from the

government, they were gathered in front of the block on the north side of State street, between James and Broadway, and seated along the curbstone, where a division was made among them *per capita*, men, women and children receiving alike.

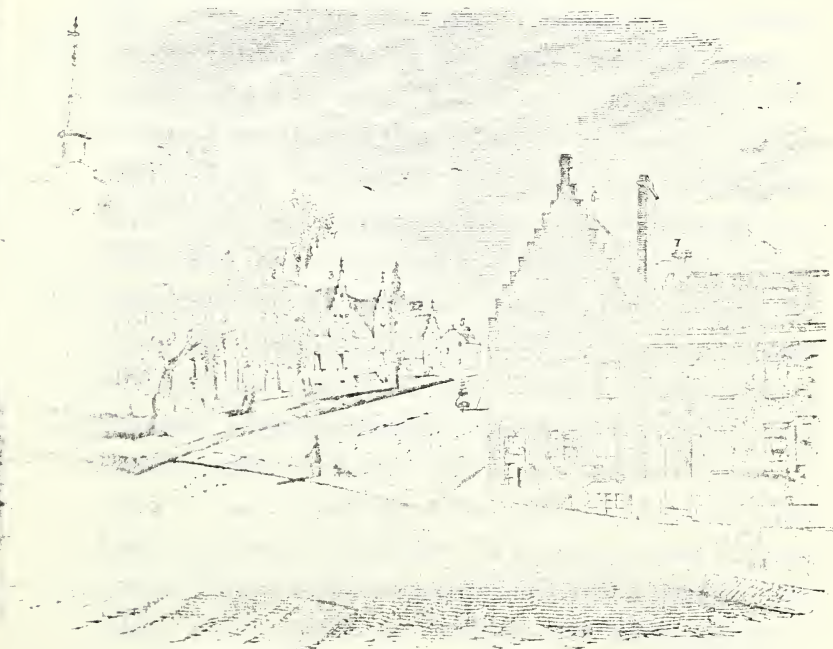
That square was entirely burnt over in 1793—the largest conflagration known to have occurred down to



that time—after which, about 1801, the Tontine, a grand hotel for the time, was built near the centre of the block, fronting on State street, a part of which remains in the stores of the late Abram Koonz and Durkee & Jenkins, topped out with two additional stories. There were no five story houses in the beginning of this century, perhaps none of four stories, unless we count some elevated gables.

The narrow space known as Middle alley was opened to its present width by curtailing the lots on

the west side, and it was called James street. Frans Janse Pruyn, the first of the name here, is supposed to have located on the corner of Maiden lane as early as 1665, and his descendants occupied the premises until 1835, two hundred years, when it passed to other hands, the last occupants of the premises of that name having deceased without posterity.



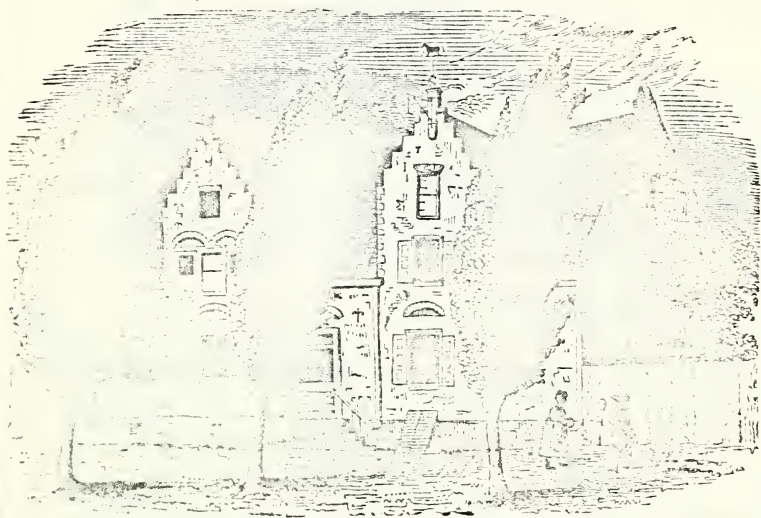
Elm tree Corner.

3 Vanderheyden House.

6 Lydius House.

The first occupant of the Hope Bank corner was Evert Janse Wendell (1663-1704) the ancestor of a numerous posterity ; and on the corner above, Gerrit Wynantse located, the progenitor of the Vanderpoels. The old Lydius house, which stood here till 1833, was taken down by Mr. George Dexter, who now owned the premises, and who thinks it was built by Dom. Schaets, and that all the material, bricks and timber were brought from Holland. But as Dom. Schaets was here from 1652 to 1683 as a preacher, when he was succeeded by Dom. Dellijs, and died in 1691 ; and that in 1664 the lot was patented to Jan Thomasse, after which it was transferred successively to Cornelius Steenwyck, and Jochim Staats and Jacob Tysse Vanderheyden, all in the time of Dominie Schaets, it is inferred that it must have been Dominie Dellijs or his successor Dominie Lydius (1700-1709), instead of Schaets who had the house that stood there ; which latter is the more plausible from the fact that his grandson, Balthasar Lydius, occupied the house and died there in 1815. The records are often quite fatal to the most fondly cherished traditions. Yet this was one of those quaint Dutch edifices so common half a century ago, when Pearl street, as well as the other streets of Albany, abounded in gable enders, surmounted by

iron horses in the attitude of doing a mile in 2:40, and also by other devices, mindful in all seasons of the true course of the wind; and by various other ornamental conceits in iron, designed to strike the beholder with awe and admiration. The Vanderheyden house



Vanderheyden House.

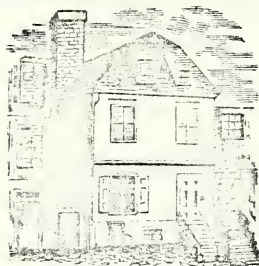
especially, which occupied the site of the Perry block, had a wierd fame, and its fantastic iron finicals were so attractive to Washington Irving that he procured them when it was demolished to decorate Sunny-side.

Passing to the elm tree corner, we have the site of the residence in the middle of the last century of Philip Livingston, one of the signers (with whom the elm tree is supposed to be coeval); afterwards of the famous publishing house of Websters & Skinners, and now of Tweddle Hall. Adjoining it on the west is the mansion still standing erected by the younger



State street looking east from Lodge to Broadway, 1805.

brother of the Patroon, Philip S. Van Rensselaer, seventeen years mayor of the city—now occupied by Erastus Corning. On the opposite side of State street, adjoining the property of the late Erastus Corning on the west, was the residence of Robert Yates,

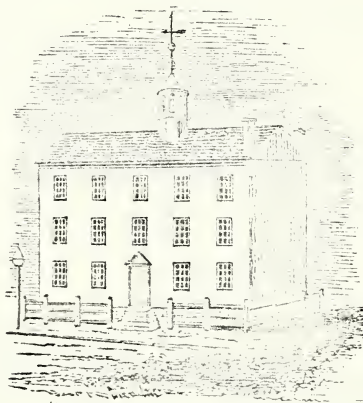


Yates House.

one of the first justices of the Supreme Court of the state, and in 1790 chief justice. He was one of the members of the convention that framed the constitution of the state, and also of the United States, and is characterized as a man of great intellectual powers. The site of this house is now occupied by the residence of Philip Wendell.

This serves very nearly to complete the circuit of the city, as far as we have time to observe and comment upon it, seldom containing within its wooden walls 3,000 inhabitants, nearly a third of whom were

soldiers and blacks. It is found that the population in 1689 was 2,016. In 1697 the census ordered by Gov. Fletcher enumerated but 1449, showing a diminution of 567, of which 16 had been taken prisoners, 84 killed by the enemy, 39 deceased, and 419 had removed to places of greater safety. On the conclusion of the-war between England and France the population rapidly increased for nearly half a century.



The City Hall, 1705.

The Indians who came to dispose of their furs were lodged in Indian houses outside of the stockades, not being allowed to remain over night within the gates, so watchful were the authorities against surprise at all times.

The Stadhuis, or City Hall, on the corner of Broadway and Hudson streets, served for the courts, the meetings of the common council, and for the confinement of criminals. In the time of the revolution disaffected persons and all sorts of desperate characters were confined here in unusual numbers. At one time several who had been condemned to execution were



Broadway, 1805, looking south towards the Church.

incarcerated in a lower room where the door of the apartment swung in a place cut out lower than the level of the floor. When the sheriff came to take them out he found the door barricaded. He procured a heavy piece of timber and endeavored to batter down the door. During the attempt the voices of the prisoners were heard threatening death to those who should persevere in the effort to molest them, stating that they had laid a train of powder to blow up themselves and their assailants. While a crowd gathered and were looking on to see the end of this singular affair, some one suggested the idea of getting at them through the ceiling. The prisoners renewed their threats of vengeance, certain, speedy and awful while this was being effected. The assailants persevered, nevertheless, and having brought the fire engine, the room was suddenly inundated and the train rendered harmless. How to descend was still a difficulty, as but one could do so at a time, and the disproportion of physical strength that apparently awaited the first intruder, for some time prevented the attempt. At last a merchant, by the name of McDole, exclaimed, "give me an Irishman's gun, and I will go first." He was provided with a formidable cudgel, and with this he descended, and the moment he struck the floor he

leveled the prisoner near him, and continued to lay about him valiantly until the room was filled with a strong party, who came to his assistance. After a hard struggle the culprits were secured, and the door, which had been barricaded by brick taken from the fire-place, was opened. They were taken, seven in number, and marched up State street, dressed in white, and executed near Elk street upon the gallows.

The last person who was marched through the streets in this way, clothed in white, preceded by a cart bearing his coffin, was Hamilton, who shot Maj. Birdsall, in 1818. Strang, who shot Whipple in 1827, and was the last murderer executed in public, was taken from the jail, corner of Eagle and Howard streets, a short distance to the gallows erected in the ravine, where High street now crosses Hudson street, and there executed in the presence of 30,000 spectators, who filled that natural amphitheatre in which no house then existed.

It was in this ancient Stadhuis that the first convention of the provinces was held in 1764. The legislature held its sessions in it at a later day, until 1806, after which it was converted into a museum, where a few will remember the marvels of the phantasmagoria, the array of wax figures, the Witch of

Endor, and other attractions that for so many years excited the wonder and admiration of the juvenile citizen and the unsophisticated rustic, under the management of Harry Meech. When removed from this place, that depot of relics, natural and artificial, had a long sojourn on the ancient Johnny Robison corner (from 1830 to 1855), in what is still known as the Museum building; and it may be interesting to know that when the institution was broken up, its celebrities were carted away, and Sir William Wallace, Charlotte Temple, Gen. Jackson, the Goddess of Liberty, the Witch of Endor, the Sleeping Beauty, the big turtle and the organ, were dumped promiscuously into a canal boat, whence they found their way to the Mississippi, and were set up anew in a floating museum, and for aught that is known to the contrary, are still voyaging up and down the father of waters, and thrilling thousands of admiring people with a pang of sweet emotion, as of old in Albany.

[For a more particular and more extended account of some of the localities and ancient streets, the reader is referred to the *Collections on the History of Albany*, vol. II, pp. 9-31; and to the *Annals of Albany*, passim; also to Prof. Pearson's *First Settlers of Albany*.]

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